

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4906
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 01212

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR PGOV WB UR UK
SUBJECT: WRIGHT-ABRASIMOV LUNCHEON, JANUARY 19

BEGIN SUMMARY. SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV PRESENTED THE UK AMBASSADOR, SIR OLIVER WRIGHT, WITH A CHECKLIST OF WESTERN VIOLATIONS OF THE QA AT THEIR LUNCHEON IN EAST BERLIN ON JANUARY 19. ABRASIMOV MENTIONED THE GENSCHER VISIT TO BERLIN WITH DE GUIRINGAUD, MEETINGS OF VARIOUS FRG BODIES AND OFFICIALS IN BERLIN, THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION, AND BERLIN REPRESENTATION IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. AFTER ANSWERING THESE COMPLAINTS, WRIGHT EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT RECENT EVENTS IN EAST BERLIN, INCLUDING SPECIFICALLY REPORTS OF THE DISCONTINUATION OF THE "GAZETTE FOR GREATER BERLIN" AND SOVIET CLAIMS THAT THE SOVIET SECTOR OF BERLIN NO LONGER HAD ANY SPECIAL STATUS. ABRASIMOV DENIED THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF A "GREATER BERLIN" AND ALSO SAID NEITHER HE NOR THE BRITISH COULD OBLIGE THE GDR TO CONTINUE PUBLICATION OF THE "GAZETTE." WRIGHT ALSO
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RAISED ALLIED PROPOSAL FOR REVISING THE 1970 AGREEMENT ON DISPOSITION OF THE REMAINS OF RUDOLF HESS. WHILE ABRASIMOV APPEARS NOT TO HAVE REJECTED THE PROPOSAL COMPLETELY, HIS REACTION WAS NEGATIVE. END SUMMARY.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MEMCON ON THE JANUARY 19 LUNCHEON AS PROVIDED BY THE UK EMBASSY:

BEGIN TEXT

1. AFTER A GENERAL DISCUSSION OVER LUNCH OF THE FEDERAL POLITICAL SCENE AND THE AFTERMATH OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENTS, ABRASIMOV OPENED DISCUSSION ON BERLIN BY SAYING THAT IT WAS USEFUL TO SUM UP THE SITUATION FROM TIME TO TIME. IN THE PAST YEAR THE SOVIET SIDE HAD MADE 40 PROTESTS TO THE THREE POWERS ABOUT THE QA. THIS WAS RATHER A LOT. SOME FEDERAL AND BERLIN POLITICIANS WERE TRYING TO SOW WEEDS ON THE COMMON GROUND ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE FOUR POWERS THE QA. THE FACT WAS THAT THE QA HAD BROUGHT ADVANTAGES TO ALL CONCERNED. THE SOVIET SIDE AND THE GDR HAD MADE SUBSTANTIAL CONCESSIONS. IN THE LAST YEAR WEST BERLINERS HAD PAID THREE AND A HALF MILLION VISITS TO EAST BERLIN AND THE GDR. THIS WAS A CONSIDERABLE CONTRAST TO THE SITUATION HE REMEMBERED SIX YEARS BEFORE.

2. ABRASIMOV THEN LAUNCHED INTO A SERIES OF SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS:

(A) HERR GENSCHER WAS ACCOMPANYING THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER ON HIS VISIT TO BERLIN THE NEXT DAY. HE HAD NO RIGHT TO CARRY OUT SUCH FUNCTIONS IN BERLIN.

(B) SO MANY FRANKTIONEN OF THE BUNDESTAG WERE DUE TO MEET IN BERLIN IN THE NEAR FUTURE AS TO CONSTITUTE VIRTUALLY A FULL MEETING OF THE BUNDESTAG ITSELF. THIS
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WAS CLEARLY PROHIBITED BY THE QA.

(C) INTERIOR MINISTERS OF THE LAENDER WERE ALSO TO MEET IN WEST BERLIN. THIS TOO WAS CONTRARY TO THE QA.

(D) DISCUSSION WAS CONTINUING IN WEST GERMAN CIRCLES ON THE GERMAN NATIONAL FOUNDATION. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COULD PUT IT WHERE THEY LIKED BUT NOT IN WEST BERLIN.

(E) WEST BERLIN WAS BEING DRAWN IN TO THE ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN TO THIS PARLIAMENT BUT WEST BERLIN SHOULD NOT FORM PART OF ANY SUCH POLITICAL GROUPING.

(F) MORE GENERALLY, SOME WEST GERMAN POLITICIANS SEEMED TO WISH FOR A COLLISION BETWEEN THE THREE WESTERN

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POWERS AND THE SOVIET UNION OVER BERLIN. AS MAO TSE
TUNG HAD SAID "LET THE TIGERS FIGHT IN THE VALLEY WHILE
WE WATCH FROM THE PEAKS."

3. IN REPLY, SIR OLIVER WRIGHT SAID HE AGREED ABOUT
THE ADVANTAGES OF THE QA BUT WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT
HUMAN TRAFFIC FROM WEST TO EAST WAS SO MUCH MORE
INTENSIVE THAN THAT IN THE REVERSE DIRECTION. AS
REGARDS ABRASIMOV'S COMPLAINTS, THE FRENCH FOREIGN
MINISTER HAD A PERFECT RIGHT TO INVITE TO BERLIN ANYBODY
HE WISHED TO ACCOMPANY HIM. AMONG THE 40 COMPLAINTS
MENTIONED BY ABRASIMOV WAS ONE CONCERNING THE GERMAN
NATIONAL FOUNDATION. THIS WAS A POTENTIAL RATHER THAN
ACTUAL PROBLEM. THE RUSSIANS WOULD OVERLOAD THE
COMPLAINTS MACHINERY IF THEY HARPED ON THINGS WHICH
MIGHT NOT HAPPEN AT ALL. AS TO THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, SIR O. WRIGHT REITERATED
THAT THE ALLIES HAD PERMITTED BERLIN TO APPOINT
REPRESENTATIVES TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT SINCE
1957. NOTHING IN THE QA PREVENTED THIS SITUATION
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CONTINUING. IT WAS NOT AT PRESENT POSSIBLE TO SAY WHAT FORM BERLIN'S REPRESENTATION WOULD TAKE IN THE FUTURE BUT THE ALLIES WOULD ENSURE THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF THOSE PARTS OF THE CITY FOR WHICH THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE.

4. SIR O. WRIGHT WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HIMSELF, THOUGH HE BELIEVED THE SUBJECT WAS ALSO GIVING CONCERN TO HIS US AND FRENCH COLLEAGUES, WAS WORRIED ABOUT RECENT EVENTS IN EAST BERLIN WHICH CAST DOUBT ON THE STATUS OF THE SOVIET SECTOR AND HENCE THE STATUS OF BERLIN AS A WHOLE. HE RECALLED THE ALLIED PROTEST OF 11 JANUARY AND SAID HE HOPED SOVIET OFFICIALS APPRECIATE ITS SERIOUSNESS. SINCE 11 JANUARY THERE HAD BEEN TWO FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) A CERTAIN NEWSPAPER HAD REPORTED THAT THE PROCESS OF TAKING OVER EAST GERMAN LEGISLATION BY THE EAST BERLIN MAGISTRATE HAD BEEN DISCONTINUED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR.

(B) A COMMENTARY ON MOSCOW RADIO HAD IMPLIED THAT THE SOVIET SECTOR OF BERLIN CEASED TO HAVE ANY SPECIAL STATUS 30 YEARS AGO. THE BERLIN SITUATION WAS COMPLICATED AND ANY UNTOWARD STEP BY ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER RISKED UPSETTING THE BALANCE AS A WHOLE. THIS WAS RECOGNIZED IN THE QA. MOST SOVIET COMPLAINTS CONCERNED RELATIVELY MINOR MATTERS. HOWEVER THE BRITISH AND THEIR WESTERN ALLIES HAD BEEN SCRUPULOUS IN MAINTAINING THE SPECIAL STATUS OF BERLIN IN AREAS OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE. WEST BERLIN HAD NOT BECOME THE CAPITAL OF THE FRG, FRG LEGISLATION DID NOT AUTOMATICALLY APPLY TO THE WSB, THERE WAS NO NON-ALLIED MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE WSB. FOR THEIR PART THE SOVIET UNION HAD ALLOWED EAST GERMAN SOLDIERS INTO EAST BERLIN. ON A RECENT OCCASION AN EAST GERMAN

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OFFICIAL HAD HAD THE PRESUMPTION TO SUGGEST THAT THE GDR HAD A "NATURAL RIGHT" TO OVERSEE THE QA. NOW THERE WERE RUMORS THAT THE VERORDNUNGSBLATT HAD CEASED PUBLICATION: IF SO, WHY? HE HOPED THAT THE SOVIET UNION DID NOT ENDORSE THE PRINCIPLE THAT GDR LAWS APPLIED AUTOMATICALLY IN EAST BERLIN.

5. SIR OLIVER WRIGHT SAID HE WAS DRAWING ATTENTION TO THESE POINTS MAINLY TO EMPHASIZE THAT RESPONSIBILITY

FOR ASSURING THE STATUS OF BERLIN AND APPLYING FOUR POWER AGREEMENTS RESTED SQUARELY ON THE FOUR POWERS. THE BRITISH WERE FULLY AWARE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. HE HOPED THE SOVIET UNION WOULD DO NOTHING TO UPSET THE STATUS OF BERLIN AND WOULD RESIST ATTEMPTS BY NON-SIGNATORIES OF THE QA TO INTERPRET IT IN THEIR OWN WAY.

6. ABRASIMOV REPLIED TO EACH OF THESE POINTS ON STANDARD LINES, LAYING STRESS ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE GDR. ON THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, HE SAID THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS PROTESTING BECAUSE, ALTHOUGH THE FOURTH PARTY CONCERNED, THEY HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED ABOUT THE ACTION OF THE THREE POWERS IN 1957. AS TO EAST BERLIN, ITS SPECIAL STATUS HAD BEEN ANNULLED BY THE ACTIONS OF THE THREE POWERS IN 1948, SINCE WHEN THERE HAD BEEN NO GREATER BERLIN. THE SOVIET UNION RECOGNIZED THE CONTINUING OCCUPATION OF WEST BERLIN BY THEIR THREE WARTIME ALLIES AND DID NOT

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ASSERT ANY RIGHT OF THE GDR IN THIS CONNECTION. THE QUESTION OF BERLIN AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT REPRESENTED A VERY SERIOUS VIOLATION OF THE QA. OFFICIAL ACTS BY THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR IN BERLIN AND THE ESTABLISHMENT THERE OF THE FEA, FOR EXAMPLE, WERE ALSO

NOT MINOR MATTERS. AS TO THE VERORDNUNGSBLATT, NEITHER HE NOR THE BRITISH COULD OBLIGE THE GDR TO CONTINUE ITS PUBLICATION. THEY WERE A SOVEREIGN STATE. HE MUST STATE AGAIN THAT AFTER ITS FOUNDATION IN 1949, THE GDR ACQUIRED THE FORMER SOVIET SECTOR AS ITS CAPITAL. THE SOVIET UNION HAD A RIGHT TO GIVE IT BECAUSE IT WAS SITUATED IN THE CENTER OF THE GDR. FOR THE SAME REASON EAST GERMAN SOLDIERS HAD A RIGHT TO BE IN THE CITY, AS THEY HAD BEEN SINCE 1949, AND WOULD REMAIN. ABRASIMOV CLAIMED THAT THE THREE POWERS HAD NO RIGHTS IN THE CAPITAL OF THE GDR, ONLY RESPONSIBILITIES. THEY MUST RECOGNIZE THE RIGHTS OF A SOVEREIGN STATE. WHY ELSE DID THEY MAINTAIN EMBASSIES JUST ACROSS THE ROAD? WESTERN RIGHTS CONSISTED IN UNIMPEDED ACCESS FOR MILITARY AND OFFICIAL PERSONNEL
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OF THE THREE POWERS. AS TO THE QA, THIS COULD BE INTERPRETED AND CARRIED OUT ONLY BY THOSE WHO SIGNED IT. THE SOVIET UNION HAD NOT GIVEN THIS RIGHT TO ANYONE ELSE AND WOULD NOT DO SO. HE CALLED ON THE WESTERN POWERS NOT TO GIVE SUCH A RIGHT TO THE FRG OR THE SENAT. SIR OLIVER WRIGHT REMINDED ABRASIMOV THAT ALLIED RIGHTS IN BERLIN STEMMED NOT FROM AGREEMENT BUT FROM THE COLLAPSE OF THE GERMAN REICH AT THE END OF THE WAR.

7. HE WENT ON TO SAY HE HAD A PROPOSAL TO MAKE IN CONNECTION WITH THE PRISONER IN SPANDAU. HE THEN SPOKE IN THE TERMS OF THE TRIPARTITELY AGREED PAPER. ABRASIMOV SAID THAT THE SOVIET POSITION WAS CLEAR. AS THEY HAD TOLD OUR PEOPLE BEFORE, HESS' BODY SHOULD BE CREMATED IN THE WSB. THE ASHES AND URN SHOULD THEN BE PASSED TO HIS RELATIVES FOR DISPOSAL. HE SEEMED TO RECALL THAT THIS HAD ALL BEEN AGREED SOME SIX YEARS PREVIOUSLY. REMINDED BY SIR OLIVER WRIGHT THAT WE WERE SEEKING A CHANGE IN WHAT WAS AGREED IN 1970, ABRASIMOV SAID OUR PROPOSAL WAS ON A PAR WITH OUR WISH TO FREE THE PRISONER. SOVIET VIEWS ON THE MATTER WERE WELL KNOWN. HE THEN ADDED THAT THE THOUGHT THAT THE QUESTION OF HOW THE PRISON BUILDING SHOULD BE USED AFTER THE PRISONER'S DEATH SHOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF A FURTHER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FOUR POWERS. SIR OLIVER WRIGHT DID NOT COMMENT ON THIS SUGGESTION. HE HANDED A COPY OF THE PROPOSED WESTERN CHRONOLOGY AND THE MEETING ENDED CORDIALLY.
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Subject: WRIGHT-ABRASIMOV LUNCHEON, JANUARY 19 BEGIN SUMMARY. SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV PRESENTED THE UK AMBASSADOR, SIR OLIVER WRIGHT, WITH A CHECK
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